

THE GREAT WAR TIMES

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FROM THE WHANGANUI AND DISTRICT
WWI CENTENARY PROGRAMME



TREATY OF VERSAILLES

Most people think that World War I ended on 11 November 1918. In fact, this was only an Armistice. The Treaty to end the war was signed on 28 June 1919 in the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles outside of Paris.

In January 1919, 32 countries met in Paris to negotiate a treaty. The Germans were not invited. The chief players in the drafting of the Treaty of Versailles were French Premier, Georges Clemenceau, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George and USA President Woodrow Wilson. None of the defeated powers had any say in the treaty, and even the other Allied countries played only minor roles. There are 15 parts and 440 articles to the Treaty. This cumbersome outcome was due to the three major negotiators wanting different things.

Woodrow Wilson wanted a League of Nations established. Under its terms, all states would be guaranteed independence and “territorial integrity”. There would be mandated territories under the League’s supervision and a Permanent Court of International Justice. He did not want harsh treatment for Germany, or Germans to carry blame for the war.

Georges Clemenceau, however, wanted Germany to be fully culpable for the war and so dismembered that it would never have the resources to wage another war with France. The Great War had been especially devastating for France in terms of land destroyed, people killed, children orphaned, food shortages and the collapse of the industrial, political and social infrastructure.

Lloyd George’s position was somewhere in between. Britain had not suffered huge land damage or infrastructure, although it had lost many men and had endured great naval losses. Britain also suffered financially in terms of debt and loss of trade and future trade. Lloyd George did not want Germany to be too severely punished. On the other hand, he did not want Germans to create a sizeable naval power (Britannia must rule the waves), but he did want them to be able to trade.

Lloyd George demanded a balance of powers, but he was adamant that Germany must pay reparation.

Over the course of six months, the “Big Three” negotiated until they had a Treaty. Part 1 of the Treaty created the Covenant of the League of Nations. The rest of the Treaty can be divided into three sections: territorial, military and financial.

Germany lost land. Belgium, Poland, France and Denmark all gained from the redefining of Germany’s borders. Germany’s colonies in Africa were given to Britain, France and Belgium. The colonies in Asia north of the equator were given to Japan. Those south of the equator were given under mandate to Australia, while German Samoa was given to New Zealand. A demilitarised zone was formed on the French-German border so that Germany could not amass troops on France’s border.

Part V of the Treaty severely reduced Germany’s military capability. The German Army was restricted to 100,000 men. Their Navy was allowed six battleships, but no submarines. The Air Force was banned.

Financially, the Treaty was very repressive to the Germans. The final reparation figure was 22 billion francs. Considering the state of the German economy, the decimation of her trading possibilities and the return of



The Versailles Palace, Hall of Mirrors
From *Versailles, Photographies En Couleurs*
Whanganui Regional Museum Collection 1966.95.10

the Saar industrial territory to France, the ability of the German State to pay 22 billion francs in reparation was unrealistic. This debt was never fully settled until 2010. Article 231 is the most contentious clause of the Treaty and often referred to as the “Guilt Clause”. This is sometimes interpreted as blaming Germany for the war, but what it does is place responsibility on Germany for reparations for losses and damages “as a consequence of the war imposed on them by the aggression of Germany and her Allies”.

When the Germans were eventually called to sign the Treaty they were horrified, especially by clause 231, but it was made very plain to them that if they did not sign, hostilities would recommence. Germany had no resources to re-engage in war. The German signatories signed under protest and the Germans named the Treaty the “Versailles Diktat”. The USA Senate refused to ratify the Treaty.

Many people at the time, and since, have felt that the Treaty was too severe. It certainly fostered resentment in the German nation, nurturing an atmosphere that led to the rise of Hitler and subsequently to World War II.

TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR

The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior honours all New Zealanders who did not return home after serving their country overseas. It is a symbol of remembrance for the sacrifice made by all New Zealand servicemen and women. Almost 30,000 New Zealanders have died serving their country in war and almost one third have no known grave.

The idea for a national memorial began in 1921, resurfaced after World War II, and finally gained the support of Government in 1999. In 2002, agreement was reached with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to repatriate the remains of a New Zealand soldier who died in World War I. There are numerous Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries in the countryside of northern France and the Unknown New Zealand Warrior was buried at Caterpillar Valley Cemetery near Longueval. The soldier’s name, rank, race, religion and other details are unknown. His was one of many unidentified graves in the area and his simple white headstone carried the words “A New Zealand soldier of the Great War known unto God”.

A carved kauri casket holds the soldier’s remains and the tomb is made of black granite, inlaid with light grey Takaka marble crosses referencing the Southern Cross and representing the companions he left behind who also

died in service of their country. Engraved around the base of the tomb is text of a karanga (call of greeting), in both Māori and English, calling the warrior back to his homeland. Written on the top of the tomb are the following words.

AN UNKNOWN NEW ZEALAND WARRIOR HE TOA MATANGARO NO AOTEAROA



Photographer: Ann McNamara, 2019

On Armistice Day (11 November) 2004, the Unknown Warrior was laid to rest in the tomb in front of the National War Memorial in Wellington.

THE WAVERLEY WORLD WAR I MEMORIALS

The Waverley Clock Tower War Memorial stands sentinel over the town on an elevated piece of ground that was once home to the Wairoa Redoubt. On it are the names of 38 local men who went to World War I and never returned. There are at least two other War Memorials in Waverley. The Primary School has a black granite obelisk, with the names of nineteen ex-pupils Killed in Action, but nine of these names are not on the Clock Tower. St Stephens Church has a brass plaque with the names of 13 parishioners killed in WWI, one of which is not on the Clock Tower. Three men who spent their early years in Waverley who were killed in action but are not on any of the Memorials are George Ivan Bridge, William Henry Muldrock and John Riddell.

It took almost six years for the citizens of Waverley to decide how to honour their men, and there were many meetings in the Town Hall. On 6 October 1923, the Chairman, Mr A J Adlam, stated that his choice of a Memorial would be a grandstand at the Domain. There were many locals in attendance, family members of dead soldiers and returned soldiers who all had very



Opening of the Waverley Clock Tower Memorial

Photographer: unknown, 28 October 1925

Whanganui Regional Museum Collection 1800.1143

strong views of what should be constructed. After much discussion, Bert Symes said the meeting was not large enough to make a final decision and the four best schemes should be put to a public vote. On 23 October, the options of the Cenotaph, Library, Gates and Clock Tower were voted on. The Clock Tower won supreme.

Bert Symes and Harold Dickie were Returned Services Association representatives for the project and worked with the Waverley Town Board to get the Clock Tower built on the chosen site. It was designed by Mr R G Talboys of Whanganui and constructed at a cost of £1,200 pounds. The Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Right Honourable Joseph G Coates, opened it on 28 October 1925. Coates, himself a returned serviceman, had seen action mostly in Belgium. He was a fine orator and would have made a stirring address to the hundreds gathered that day.

The plaque with the names of the 38 soldiers killed is also inscribed with the following quote:

For God and humanity they whose names are inscribed thereon men of this district laid down their lives in the

Great War 1914-1918. Erected by their fellow citizens in proud and loving memory and as a thanksgiving that such men were of their number.

The Waverley Primary School Memorial was opened on 21 October 1920 by Miss Elsie Southcombe, daughter of Charles Southcombe, the Chairman of the School Committee. Drinking fountains on either side of the obelisk were removed in later years. A WWI German machine gun from the Battle of Somme distributed by the Government as a war trophy, stood in the Waverley Domain for many years, until it was removed in 1934 and returned to the 13th Battery RNZA.

In the Waverley-Waitōtara Returned Services Association book, written by Michael Condon in 1995, it states that after the War, a list of 232 names was compiled by the Waverley Patriotic Society of men from the Waverley district that served. The names were not printed in the book and nobody knows where the list is.

Researching almost a century on, local historian Jacq Dwyer commented that she had found the names of 214 men and women with connections to Waverley who went to WWI, but only 48 were recorded on the town's memorials. There has never been a roll of honour for those who did return.

Thanks to Jacq Dwyer, Patea Historical Society, for compiling the information in this article.

IN MEMORIAM

The Commonwealth War Cemeteries are looked after by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, an organisation conceived in 1915 amidst the chaos of the Somme, but now a well-oiled multi-national trust servicing 2,500 war cemeteries in 153 countries. The Commission operates through the continual financial support of Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

In September 1914, Fabian Ware, aged 45, an English man too old to fight, used his influence to set up and operate a mobile unit of the Red Cross on the battlefields of France. While there, he became concerned by a lack of any mechanism to record and mark the location of the graves of those who had been killed. He felt compelled to form an organisation within the Red Cross to do this. In March 1915, the Imperial War Office recognised Ware's work and transferred responsibility for it to the British Army. The organisation became known as the Graves Registration Commission. By October 1915, a year after the war began, the Commission had 31,000 names of British and Imperial Forces registered, and by May 1916, had 50,000 registered graves.

At this point, it was realised that French municipal cemeteries were not going to be able to cope with the numbers of dead, so Ware negotiated with France, and later with Belgium, for these countries to provide land for soldiers' burials, lease it to the British, and the British would take responsibility for its maintenance. As the war continued and the numbers of dead continued to grow, Ware became concerned about the fate of the graves, post-war, and in May 1917 the Imperial War Graves Commission was established, later in 1960 renamed the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Once land for the cemeteries and the memorials had been guaranteed, the task of recording the dead and the assumed-dead could begin. By 1918, 587 graves had been identified and 559,000 casualties recorded as having no known grave.

Eminent architects were appointed to design these memorials and cemeteries. All service men had to be individually buried, and the missing had to be individually recorded on a memorial. The Menin Gate was the first Memorial to the Missing. It records 54,984 names but actually did not have sufficient room for all the missing. Another 34,986 names had to be recorded on the Tyne Cot Memorial to the Missing. Canada, India, South Africa and Australia have erected in France their own Memorials to the Missing.

No such exclusive memorial was erected for New Zealanders. Instead, NZ chose to have her men honoured near where they had fallen. In the cemetery at Caterpillar



Headstones at Arras Memorial in Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery
Photographer: Ann McNamara, 2017

Valley is the Caterpillar Valley (New Zealand) Memorial to the Missing, which takes the form of a colonnade, commemorating 1,200 New Zealanders who died on the Somme in 1916 and have no known grave. The New Zealand Memorial Apse at Tyne Cot cemetery lists 1,176 New Zealanders missing. Grevillers and Messine Ridge British cemeteries also contain New Zealand Memorials.

All cemeteries on the Somme follow the same design and aesthetic. They are surrounded by a low wall or hedge, and near the entrance is a register that numerates the plots, rows and soldiers' names. All headstones are made of Portland stone, measuring 76 x 38 x 7.6 centimetres. All bear a cross unless it is known that the soldier was not a Christian. Headstones of Jewish soldiers bear the Star of David. If the family wishes, there may be no religious symbol at all. Above the cross is the soldier's regimental badge or national emblem (New Zealanders have a silver fern), his rank, name, unit, date of death and age. If the soldier is unknown, then the inscription reads, "A soldier of the Great War, known unto God". All headstones are identical, regardless of rank, social class, nationality or creed and are surrounded by a border of flowers.

Ironically, the War Graves Commission had not finished its work memorialising the dead of World War I when World War II broke out. Names of the missing were still being carved into the Menin Gate when Hitler invaded Belgium.

Of course, the War Graves Trust's responsibilities now include the dead and the missing of both World Wars, and soldiers' skeletons still turn up in Flanders Fields. The work of the Trust continues and expands 100 years after it was first formed.

COMING HOME

New Zealand troops began to return from overseas from as early as 1914 while the last men did not return until 1921. There were still 56,000 men overseas or at sea after the Armistice was signed in November 1918 and the NZ Defence Department organised the return of the vast majority of them in 1919. New Zealanders welcomed the returning troops in a variety of ways. The first large groups received wholly enthusiastic public welcomes while others arrived home with little fanfare and were welcomed by their family, friends and local communities.

The first men to return to New Zealand were from Samoa and arrived in Wellington on the troopships *Moeraki* and *Monowai* in September 1914.

On 15 July 1915, the first large group of men wounded at Gallipoli arrived on the *Willochra*, in Wellington, to a tumultuous welcome. Men bound for Auckland and other areas served by the Main Trunk Line embarked on

a specially outfitted Red Cross Train to complete their journey home.

The first men to return from Gallipoli after convalescing in England arrived on the *Ruahine* in Auckland in January 1916. They received an enthusiastic welcome, as did the large groups of men who arrived home on the country's two hospital ships the *Maheno* and *Marama*.

The Māori (Pioneer) Battalion were the only troops to return home as a unit. The Battalion arrived on the Westmoreland at Waitematā Harbour on 5 April 1919 and men from Whanganui and the West Coast received a hero's welcome at Pūtiki Marae on 7 April. The celebrations extended over six days.

In 1920, men continued to be quietly welcomed, but their numbers had reduced from hundreds to tens. The last draft of a few men arrived on the *Athenic* in September 1920. The very last men, some wounded and some from NZEF headquarters in London, returned to New Zealand in 1921, travelling alongside ordinary passengers.

YEARNING FOR HOME

Shortly after the outbreak of World War I, Sling Camp, on the Salisbury Plain in Britain, housed many New Zealand troops and became known colloquially as ANZAC Camp. Sling Camp, officially the 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade Reserve Camp, was the chief New Zealand training camp throughout the war, preparing reinforcements and rehabilitating casualties. Senior personnel were tough on discipline and training. Otherwise, conditions were reasonable, with huts that were heated in winter, good food, libraries and billiard rooms. A nearby cinema provided entertainment. By 1918 an estimated 4,300 men lived in Sling Camp.

After the war ended, Sling Camp became a repatriation centre with 6,000 servicemen waiting to sail home. By March 1919 troop ships were still in short supply and the influenza pandemic had added to organisational difficulties, as well as killing hundreds of servicemen.

Troops were getting restless, and they just wanted to go home. The officers introduced a series of enforced marches. The men requested relaxed discipline - after all, the war was over. When their request was denied some rioted, looting messes and stealing officers' alcohol. Others simply refused to follow orders. The riot died out and the men were promised that there would be no consequences for their actions. The ringleaders, however, were arrested and, ironically, promptly shipped back to New Zealand, whereas some of the troops did not reach home until 1920.



Postcard of the newly carved kiwi above Sling Camp

Photographer: unknown

Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=18041333>

Still fed up at delay after delay in repatriation, the men were put to work carving a large kiwi into the chalk on Beacon Hill behind Sling Camp. The kiwi was designed by Sergeant Major P C Blenkarne, based on a sketch of a taxidermied kiwi held at the British Museum. Victor Lo Keong, born in Dunedin and known as Sergeant Major Low, surveyed the area and extended the design of the kiwi, which covers an area of 1.5 acres. An impressive effort.

In the 1920s, the Kiwi Polish Company took over maintenance of the chalk kiwi and paid local villagers to take care of it. During World War II, it was covered to prevent German planes using it as a navigation point. In the 1950s, Blenkarne arranged for the British Army to maintain the kiwi. In 2017, it received protection as a scheduled monument.

IMPACT OF WAR ON FAMILIES

With over 102,000 men of military age called up during the four years of WWI and the population of New Zealand barely a million, the aftermath of four long years of war directly affected most New Zealand families. If there were no immediate family members killed or wounded, there would certainly be other relatives, friends, and neighbours.

Most soldiers married after returning home. They were expected to get on with life and resume jobs they had held prior to 1914. Many did so, seemingly unaffected by their experiences, but the casualties of war were not restricted to the dead and wounded or identifiable physical disabilities. Servicemen did not easily talk about their experiences to family, despite clear evidence of trauma such as nightmares, social isolation, depression, inability to hold down a job, heavy drinking and claustrophobia. "I was so confused when I came home.

The only place I felt at home was the pub”.

Other health conditions contributed to disability, like the long-term effects of gassing or recovering from influenza after the 1918-1919 epidemic. These issues directly affected family income. Records of the War Relief Association reveal that long-term unemployment was compounded by fits of restlessness, unprovoked outbursts and alcoholism. “I’d work on the farm during the day and go out with my mates at night. After I had a breakdown I’d disappear for long periods. Dad caught me. I ended up in Hanmer Springs for three months. Came right when I returned home.”

Roles were changing too. Women who had held jobs during the war were required to relinquish them to returning soldiers after the Armistice. Many felt a loss of independence and authority. Men were expected to be loving fathers to children unknown to them.

Help was available in terms of land grants and disability pensions but this support also created a gap in income between those that had served (and were eligible) and those who depended on civilian breadwinners (and were ineligible). In 1920, 4,731 applications were received for financial hardship from the National War Relief Association. The Returned Services Association (RSA) sold poppies to provide social assistance and provided small loans for families. About 10,000 men took advantage of the Government’s Soldier Settlement Scheme that made land available at cheap rates, with varying degrees of success. Clearing land was hard and isolating and women worked as hard as their men did. Some men recovered emotionally in the bush, however, far away from noise and the pub.

Despite a longing for peace and dreaming of returning to a home untouched by war, they had changed. They came home with dark memories and the grief at loss of comrades and friends. Many families were left struggling for financial survival and social stability. Peace was hard.



Comical War Postcard

"Directing the Way at the Front:
Yer knows the dead 'orse 'cross
the road?

Well, keep straight on till yer
comes to a p'rambulator 'longside
a Johnson 'ole."

Whanganui Regional Museum
Collection: 1805.64.2.16

THE APPRENTICE AND THE MASTER

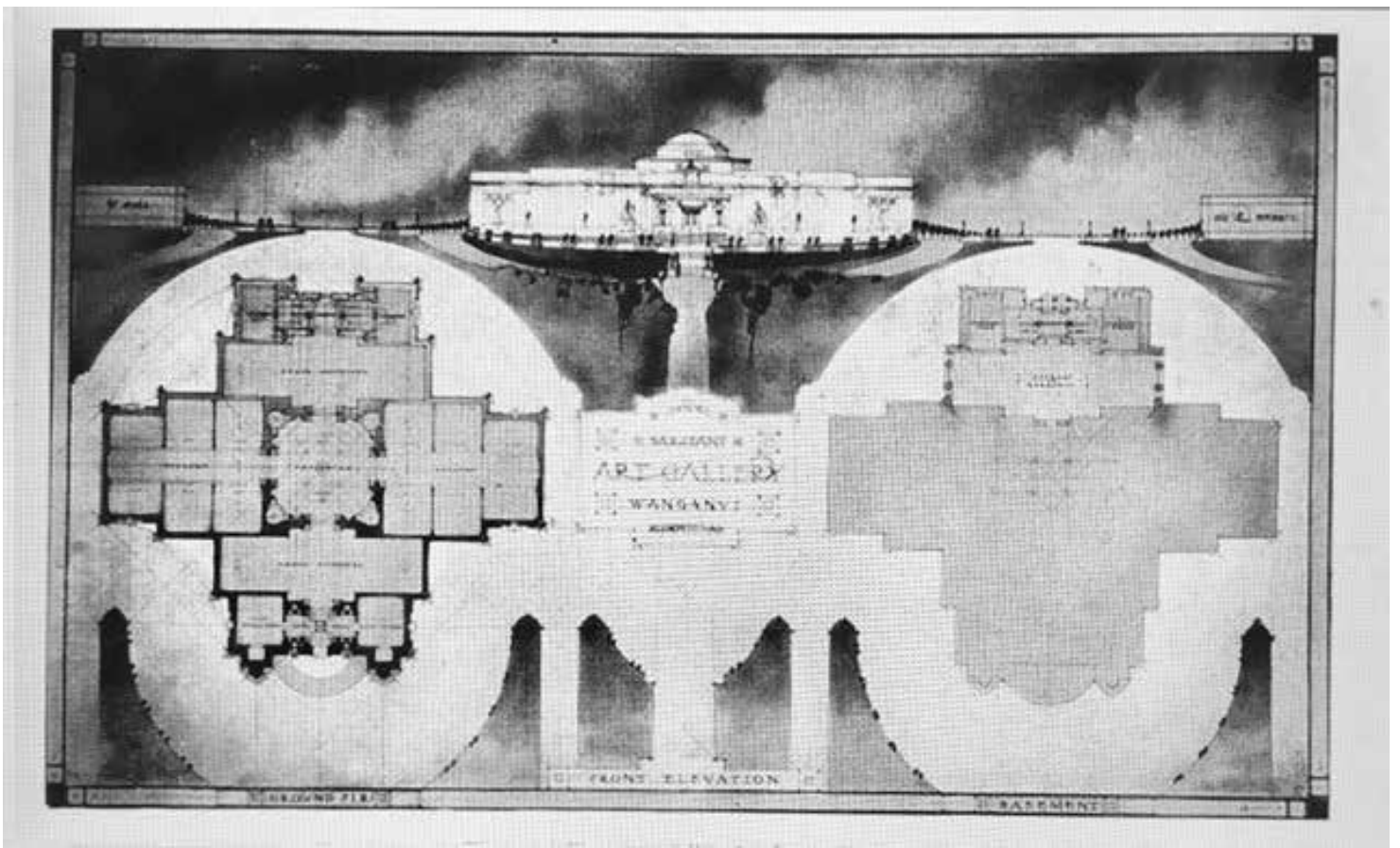
Henry Sarjeant died in 1912 and left a bequest to establish and maintain a fine art gallery in Whanganui. Land was set aside for the gallery in Queens Park and after consultation with other art galleries, it was agreed to hold a national competition for a gallery design. Mr Samuel Hurst Seager, architect and lecturer in Architecture at the Canterbury College School of Art, Christchurch, was appointed as the assessor for the competition in September 1915. Thirty-three designs were submitted and in May 1916, four were shortlisted for the final stage.

There has been a lot of discussion as to who should be credited with the winning design. Today, the consensus is that it was Donald Hosie, a young architect who was an articled pupil (a trainee) of Edmund Anscombe, an established Dunedin architect.

Plan Number 16 from the office of Edmund Anscombe and Associates was chosen as the winner of the competition, but some questions were raised about the design. In October, Mr Seager investigated the rumours about Donald Hosie having been the creator of the design, interviewing both Mr Anscombe and Donald Hosie. He concluded that the rumours were true and informed the Wanganui Borough Council of his decision on 7 November 1916. Legal opinion was sought from two firms but they gave contradictory advice. The Council, however, declared Mr Anscombe the winner on the grounds that as Hosie was an articled pupil, Anscombe, as his principal, owned the copyright on the design. The winner of the competition was announced on 12 December 1916. Hosie was not credited with the design as he felt he was bound by the terms of apprenticeship. In explaining his reluctance to expose Mr Anscombe's deception, Mr Hosie said, "he was a young man and would have his chance again".

Before the official announcement of the competition, the Mayor of Wanganui, Charles Mackay, contacted Sergeant Hosie on 28 November 1916 to ask him to apply for leave from the Military Camp at Featherston, where he was training, to complete the drawings for the gallery. Correspondence followed between the military and Mackay, but the request was finally refused by the Camp Commandant on 7 February 1917.

Mayor Mackay then approached Major General Sir Alfred Robins (later KCMG) in Wellington. He was Brigadier General of the NZ Expeditionary Forces. Mayor



Plans and Elevation of Winning Design No. 16

Sarjeant Gallery Collection

Mackay stressed the importance of the request for leave and on 23 Feb 1917, General Robins sent a telegram to Mayor Mackay granting Hosie the requested leave.

Donald Peter Brown Hosie was born in Naseby, Central Otago in 1895. He was conscripted in 1916 to fight in in the NZ Expeditionary Force and was in training at Featherston Military Camp towards the end of that year. Hosie was just 21 when he embarked for Europe in March 1917 after completing the Sarjeant Gallery drawings. He was tragically killed at Ypres in Belgium at the battle of Passchendaele on 12 October 1917, aged 22. A memorial headstone for Corporal Hosie is at the Passchendaele New British Cemetery in Belgium and his name is on the Naseby War Memorial.

Donald Hosie died just three weeks after the Sarjeant Gallery foundation stone was laid. It was his only building.



Donald Hosie is third from right at Featherston Training Camp, 1917

Photographer: unknown
Sarjeant Gallery Collection

With thanks to Whanganui District Council Archivist Simon Bloor, Alexander Heritage Library staff and Jaki Arthur of Sarjeant Gallery, for information supplied for this article.

BOOK REVIEW

BEHIND THE TWISTED WIRE NEW ZEALAND ARTISTS IN WORLD WAR I

BY JENNIFER HAWORTH, 2016

This book is a comprehensive pictorial account of the war years presented through the eyes of 14 soldiers who were also artists. Only two were official war artists, appointed by the New Zealand military in 1918. George Butler had arrived in New Zealand as a child, educated here, but returned to Britain in 1905 where he had made a living as a full time artist. His military role was to complete portraits and large-scale action studies of New Zealanders at the Front. Nugent Welch was a well-known Wellington landscape artist. His job was to record the landscapes of the Western Front. He included in his paintings the destructive power of war by portraying ruined buildings and crosses, memorialising the men who had been lost.

Sapper Horace Moore-Jones also features. Authorities noticed him making landscape drawings in the trenches at Gallipoli. He was ordered to paint a series of studies of the terrain because topographic maps were not available. His sketches, drawings and watercolours provided information for planning operations and defensive manoeuvres by the Allies. Moore-Jones has an extra chapter detailing one of his much loved and reproduced

paintings, *Simpson and his Donkey at ANZAC*. This painting, nominally of Private John Simpson Kirkpatrick and his donkey Murphy, was created when Moore-Jones took an exhibition of his watercolours to Dunedin in 1918, three years after the Gallipoli landings. He altered the composition of an original photograph to make a more dramatic drawing. The photograph is actually of a New Zealand stretcher-bearer, Richard (Dick) Henderson.

The other 11 artist-soldiers are allocated a chapter each. All had studied and practised art before they enlisted. They were expected to serve as front line soldiers first, and to record their experiences when opportunity offered.

Haworth has compiled a vivid portrait by adding a narrative that explains the artists' perceptions of war, the individual histories pre and post war and the horrific conditions under which the works were produced. She states that her intention always was to use the works created to bring the reader closer to the world of these artist soldiers. This wonderful book is available from the Whanganui District Library.



The Sphinx, one of the many Wings of Sairi Bair, honeycombed with dug-outs

Original painting: Sapper Horace Moore-Jones, 1915
Whanganui Regional Museum Collection 1936.25.8

NEW ZEALAND PHOTOGRAPHERS AT WAR



Wellington Machine Gun Section at Gallipoli

Photographer: W A Hampton, 1915
Whanganui Regional Museum Collection
1952.12.1

men and women were not permitted to take photographs or write about campaigns or battles in case information fell into the hands of the enemy. The broad spectrum of WWI photography that still exists in New Zealand was, however, by these amateurs and chancers.

A series of photographs was taken by photographer William Alfred Hampton, of the Wellington Infantry Battalion, on Gallipoli in 1915. He lived in Charlton Street in Whanganui and was a keen photographer. His Gallipoli photos were printed as both postcards and large images, widely distributed. These images were up close and personal. Not only did they show the Gallipoli landings, they showed the gritty realism of fear, chaos and fatigue.

On 5 August 1914, New Zealand declared war on Germany in support of Great Britain. A lad from Whanganui, Billy Connell, enlisted and went off to war with the Main Body of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. He also had a camera in his kitbag and took photographs throughout much of his war. His images tell the story of an ordinary soldier during extraordinary times. The photographs were arranged into seven albums and were donated to the Whanganui Regional Museum in 1966.

New Zealand officials did not appoint an official photographer until 1917 when British photographer Henry Armytage Sanders was made Official Photographer and Cinematographer. His visual record of New Zealanders on the Western Front in 1917 and 1918 leads the world in World War I photography.

Even though unofficial photography was illegal, many ordinary servicemen carried small cameras to war. Serving

ROWING FOR PEACE - THE ARMY EIGHT

During World War I Allied generals, with backgrounds at English public schools and their colonial equivalents, saw competitive sport as ideal training for and relief from war in the trenches. Frequent athletic, boxing and football events were run for the troops, as they were easy to organise and required little equipment.

Rowing had not featured much because of difficulty in obtaining boats and flat-water courses. From 1917, rowing contests began in earnest amongst the allied armies. A New Zealand club, with a large contingent from Whanganui, was formed at Codford Camp in 1918 and proved highly successful.

In 1919, a revival of the famous annual rowing races at Henley-on-Thames was dubbed the "Peace Regatta". After wins in Paris and Marlow, and in recognition of the prestige attached to Henley, the New Zealand Expeditionary Force commissioned a new eight-oar shell from Sims & Son at Putney. Three Whanganui rowers at Codford, Bill Coombes, George Wilson and Clarrie Healey, were among the crew. The King's Cup on 4 July 1919, the climax of the Peace Regatta, saw a fierce battle between the Army Eight and a crew from Cambridge University, with the English team just pulling off a win.

Despite official orders to sell the boat, it embarked for home on the HMNZTS *Tainui* and arrived in September 1919. The Army decided the most appropriate home for its famous vessel would be the Union Boat Club of Whanganui. At the time, there were fewer than 10 eight-oared shells in the country, none as fast as this. The lightness of the timber was a major factor, but the revolutionary three-piece sectional construction also provided significantly greater rigidity and strength.

From 1925, the boat was raced with much success at home and abroad. Its triumphant retirement came after winning the eights race at the 1961 New Zealand Rowing Championships.

Conservators Detlef Klein and Aaron Roberts of Manawatū Museum Services have been working for six years to repair the boat for the New Zealand Army Museum with the intention of completing the work during 2019, the centenary year of the Peace Regatta. The conservation process is not designed to return the craft to its original, as-new state. The dents, scratches and repairs accumulated over the years are part of the boat and help to tell its remarkable story. The boat is on exhibition in the Whanganui Regional Museum until September this year.

PEACE CELEBRATIONS

On Saturday 19 July, Marton put on a great show to officially celebrate the Peace. Shopkeepers decorated their premises with bunting and greenery. Public buildings and the path of the procession had flags flying. At 8.00am, a 21 Gun Salute heralded Peace Day. The Citizens Band and about 100 Returned Servicemen led the parade, marching in rank. They were followed by Territorials, Senior Cadets, School Cadets, Boy Scouts, Fire Brigade, Veterans, Friendly Societies and civic leaders. Citizens in fancy dress and decorated floats brought up the rear in a spectacle of colour and joy. On arrival at Marton Park, speeches were made by Mayor W C Kensington and several others. The fire bell tolled at noon and the assembly stood, heads bared, in tribute to the dead. Five minute's silence was followed by the Last Post.

Sunday and Monday were taken up with church services and more peace celebrations.



Souvenir Programme of Marton Peace Celebrations, 1919

Printer: *Rangitikei Advocate Press*

Grateful thanks to John Vickers for providing this image and information.

For information on all national activities commemorating the centennial of World War I, visit the official website www.ww100.govt.nz.

Similarly, in Whanganui, peace was celebrated with a procession in Victoria Avenue led by bands and ex-servicemen. Motor cars with club and commercial tableaux drove east towards the Town Bridge and crowds lined the sides of the Avenue. At the Wanganui Racecourse Mayor Charles Mackay read the King's Message and the Wanganui Male Choir sang a peace anthem before a large crowd. A huge crowd gathered on Queens Park and enjoyed a children's peace tableau and more speeches.



The procession progressing along Victoria Avenue, 19 July 1919

Photographer: Tesla Studios

Whanganui Regional Museum Collection 1805.878a

THE LAST POST

Issue 13 is the final issue of *The Great War Times*. Local historian Wendy Pettigrew initiated the publication of this newsletter in 2014 as part of the WWI Centenary Programme. Sadly, she only completed two issues before she died. Wendy, however, left an outline of topics to research and publish, which we have completed and added to.

The Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust is extremely grateful to the writing team who compiled the remaining 11 issues and to others already acknowledged who contributed articles. The core writing team for these publications is listed below:

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Tricia Duncan	Trust member
Libby Sharpe	Senior Curator, Whanganui Regional Museum
Jenny Shaw	Trust member

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